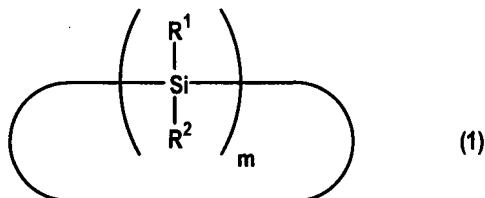


IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (*Currently Amended*) An electrophotographic photosensitive element comprising at least a top surface layer containing a polysilane, wherein the polysilane comprises a cyclic polysilane represented by the following formula (1):



wherein R¹ and R² are the same or different from each other and each represents [[a]] an alkyl group, a cycloalkyl group, an aryl group, or an aralkyl group, at least one hydrogen atom of the alkyl group, the cycloalkyl group, the aryl group, or the aralkyl group, may be substituted with an alkyl group, a cycloalkyl group, an aryl group, or an aralkyl group;

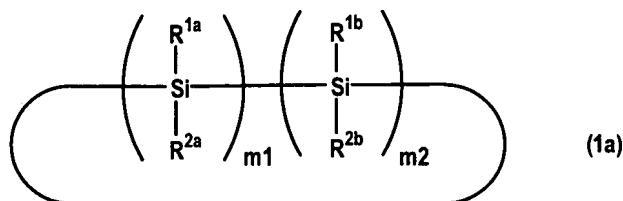
"m" denotes an integer of not less than 4; and

R¹ and R² may vary depending on the coefficient "m", respectively.

2. (*Original*) An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 1, wherein, in the formula (1), at least one of R¹ and R² represents an aryl group, and "m" is an integer of 4 to 10.

3. (*Original*) An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 1, wherein, in the formula (1), R¹ and R² each represents a phenyl group, and "m" is an integer of 4 to 8.

4. (*Currently Amended*) An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 1, wherein the cyclic polysilane is represented by the following formula (1a):



wherein R^{1a} and R^{2a} each represents an aryl group in which at least one hydrogen atom thereof may be substituted with ~~an alkyl~~ an alkyl group;

R^{1b} and R^{2b} are the same or different from each other and each represents an alkyl group which at least one hydrogen atom thereof may be substituted with a C₅₋₈cycloalkyl group or a C₆₋₁₀aryl group, a cycloalkyl group in which at least one hydrogen atom thereof may be substituted with a linear or branched C₁₋₄alkyl group, a C₅₋₈cycloalkyl group or a C₆₋₁₀aryl group, or an aryl group in which at least one hydrogen atom thereof may be substituted with an alkyl group;

provided that both R^{1b} and R^{2b} are not coincidentally an aryl group in which at least one hydrogen atom thereof may be substituted with an alkyl group;

m1 denotes an integer of not less than 1;

m2 denotes 0 or an integer of not less than 1; and

m1+m2 denotes an integer of not less than 4.

5. (Original) An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 4, wherein R^{1a} and R^{2a} each represents a C₆₋₁₀aryl group;

a combination of R^{1b} and R^{2b} is (1) a combination of a C₁₋₄alkyl group and a C₁₋₄alkyl group, (2) a combination of a C₁₋₄alkyl group and a C₆₋₁₀aryl group, (3) a combination of a C₁₋₄alkyl group and a C₅₋₈cycloalkyl group, or (4) a combination of a C₆₋₁₀aryl group and a C₅₋₈cycloalkyl group.

6. (Original) An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 4, wherein m1 is an integer of 1 to 10, m2 is an integer of 0 to 10, and m1+m2 is 4 to 12.

7. (Original) An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 4, wherein m1 is an integer of 1 to 8, m2 is an integer of 0 to 8, and m1+m2 is 4 to 10.

8. (Original) An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 1, wherein the polysilane is a polysilane mixture containing a cyclic polysilane.

9. *(Previously Presented)* An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 1, which comprises at least both of an electroconductive support and a photosensitive layer, wherein the photosensitive layer comprises at least the following components:

- a charge-generating agent;
- a charge-transporting agent; and
- a binder resin.

10. *(Original)* An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 9, wherein the photosensitive layer comprises a charge-generating layer, and a charge-transporting layer formed on the charge-generating layer.

11. *(Original)* An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 9, wherein a surface protection layer containing the polysilane is formed on the photosensitive layer.

12. *(Original)* An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 1, wherein the content of the cyclic polysilane is 0.01 to 10% by weight relative to the whole components of the top surface layer.

13. *(Original)* An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 1, wherein the content of the cyclic polysilane is 0.01 to 5% by weight relative to the whole components of the top surface layer.

14. *(Original)* An electrophotographic photosensitive element according to claim 8, wherein the top surface layer comprises an outer surface layer of the photosensitive layer or a surface protection layer of the photosensitive layer, and the proportion of a cyclic homo- or copolysilane having at least a diarylsilane unit is 0.01 to 3% by weight relative to whole components of the top surface layer.

15. *(Currently Amended)* A method for producing an electrophotographic photosensitive element recited in claim 1, which comprises forming at least a photosensitive

layer on an electroconductive support to obtain the electrophotographic photosensitive element, wherein a cyclic polysilane recited in claim 1 is incorporated into at least a top surface of the electrophotographic photosensitive element.

16. (*Previously Presented*) An electrophotographic photosensitive element composition, which comprises a component for an outer surface layer of a photosensitive layer or a component for a surface protection layer of a photosensitive layer, and a cyclic polysilane recited in claim 1.

17. (*Original*) A composition according to claim 16, which comprises a binder, a cyclic polysilane, and at least one member selected from the group consisting of a charge-generating agent and a charge-transporting agent.

18. (*Original*) A composition according to claim 17, wherein the binder comprises a polycarbonate-series resin.

19. (*Original*) An electrophotographic cartridge, which is provided with an electrophotographic photosensitive element recited in claim 1.

20. (*Original*) An electrophotographic apparatus, which is provided with an electrophotographic photosensitive element recited in claim 1.